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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/720,173	11/25/2003	Eun-Bong Han	102-1003	4330
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STANZIONE & KIM, LLP 919 18TH STREET, N.W. SUITE 440 WASHINGTON, DC 20006			EXAMINER LIANG, LEONARD S	
			ART UNIT 2853	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 05/08/2007	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/720,173

Applicant(s)

HAN, EUN-BONG

Examiner

Leonard S. Liang

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 February 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-31 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 2, 4, 6, 8-11, 19, 20, 24, 25 and 31 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 3, 5, 7, 12-18, 21-23 and 26-30 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 03/13/07.
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____.
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

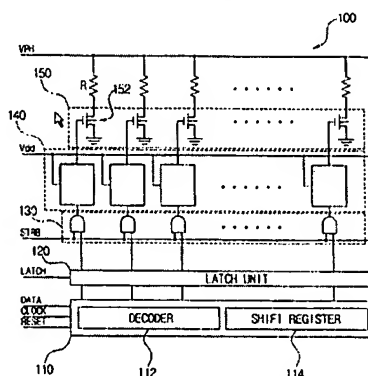
Claims 1, 4, 6, 8, 24-25, and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by the applicant's admitted prior art.

The applicant's admitted prior art discloses:

- {claim 1} An inkjet printer head driving apparatus having a plurality of heating elements and nozzles (figure 1, reference 100); a switching unit turning on and off each of the heating elements to heat ink corresponding to selected nozzles to eject the ink (figure 1, reference 150); a level shift unit having a level converter converting a potential level of a signal inputted therein into a predetermined potential level to drive the switching unit (figure 1, reference 140), a buffer to output the converted level of the signal (figure 2, reference 144), and a transient time extending part provided with at least one time extending element to extend by a predetermined time a transient time of the output potential level of the signal during which the potential level of the signal inputted from the level converter to the switching unit is converted from a first signal level to a second signal level and vice versa (figure 1-2, reference 140); a control unit receiving an external

data signal, decoding the received data signal, and outputting the decoded data signal as a nozzle selection signal to the level shift unit to select the selected nozzles corresponding to a to-be-recorded image from the nozzles (figure 1, reference 110)

FIG. 1
(PRIOR ART)



- {claim 4} wherein the transient time extending part comprises a first inverter inverting the signal outputted from the level converter (figure 2, reference INV1); and a second inverter extending the transient time from the first signal level to the second signal level or a second transient time from the second signal level to the first signal level in correspondence to an output signal of the first inverter (figure 2, reference INV2)
- {claim 6} A control method of an inkjet printer head driving apparatus having a switching unit driving heating elements corresponding to selected nozzles to eject ink through selected nozzles (figure 1, reference 150); outputting a nozzle selection signal to select nozzles corresponding to a to-be-recorded image out of the plural nozzles; receiving an inputted signal corresponding to the nozzle selection signal and converting a level of the inputted signal to a predetermined

potential level to drive the switching unit, and outputting the converted level of the inputted signal; extending a transient time of the output level of the inputted signal by a predetermined time in accordance with an output signal generating when the level of the inputted signal is converted, the transient time being a time period during which the level is converted from a first signal level to a second signal level and vice versa; and driving the heating elements corresponding to the selected nozzles to eject the ink through the selected nozzles based on the output signal from the transient time extending operation (figure 1-2, reference 140; Specification paragraph 0006-0014)

- {claim 8} An inkjet printer head driving apparatus having a plurality of heating elements and nozzles (figure 1, reference 100); a control unit generating a control nozzle selection signal to select a heating element and a nozzle corresponding to an image to be printed (figure 1, reference 110); a level shift unit generating a first nozzle selection signal having a first transient time, during which a level of the first nozzle selection signal is changed between first and second levels, in response to the control nozzle selection signal, and generating a second nozzle selection signal having a second transient time extended by a period from the first transient time of the first nozzle selection signal (figure 1-2, reference 140); and a switching unit turning on and off the heating element according to the second nozzle selection signal (figure 1, reference 150)
- {claim 24} wherein the switching unit comprises an FET, and a turning-on time of the FET is delayed by the period during which the first transient time of the

first nozzle selection signal is extended to the second transient time of the second nozzle selection signal, to provide a sufficient time to charge and discharge a parasitic capacitance around the FET (figure 1, reference 152; specification paragraph 0006-0014, 0020)

- {claim 25} wherein the control nozzle selection signal comprises on and off signals to turn on and off the switching unit corresponding to the heating element, the level shift unit comprises a level converter to convert the control nozzle selection signal into the first nozzle selection signal having the first and second levels which are different from the on and off signals in signal level respectively (paragraph 0006-0025)
- {claim 31} An inkjet head driving unit (figure 1); a control unit to generate a nozzle selection signal to select a nozzle having a heating element (figure 1, reference 110); a level shift unit to convert the nozzle selection signal to have a predetermined level to drive the heating element between a logic high and a logic low and having a buffer to output the converted nozzle selection signal (figure 2, reference 144), and one or more logic units to increase a time required to change the output nozzle selection signal between the logic high and the logic low (figure 1-2, reference 140); and a switching unit to turn the heating element on and off according to the output of the level shift unit (figure 1, reference 150)

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The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 2, 9-11, and 19-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the applicant's admitted prior art in view of Hiwada (US Pat 6273537).

The applicants admitted prior art discloses:

- {claim 2} The inkjet printer head driving apparatus (as applied to claim 1 above)
- {claims 9-11} The inkjet printer head driving apparatus (as applied to claim 8 above)
- {claim 10} wherein the switching unit comprises a transistor having a first terminal coupled to the level shift unit, a second terminal coupled to the heating element, and a third terminal connected to a potential, and the residual voltage of the switching unit is a voltage of the first terminal (figure 1, reference 150)
- {claim 19} The inkjet printer head driving apparatus (as applied to claim 8 above); the first nozzle selection signal comprises a previous first nozzle selection signal and a current first nozzle selection signal, and the second nozzle selection signal comprises a previous second nozzle selection signal and a current second nozzle selection signal corresponding to the previous first nozzle selection signal and the current first nozzle selection signal of the first nozzle selection signal, respectively, and the voltage of the switching unit is a residual voltage remaining in the switching unit when the switching unit is turned off

according to the previous second nozzle selection signal (specification paragraph 0006-0025)

- {claim 20} The inkjet printer head driving apparatus (as applied to claim 8 above); wherein the voltage of the switching unit is another residual voltage remaining in the switching unit when the switching unit is turned off according to the current second nozzle selection signal (specification paragraph 0006-0025)

The applicant's admitted prior art differs from the claimed invention in that it does not disclose:

- {claim 2} a discharging part discharging a residual voltage of a signal inputted from the level shift unit to a gate of the switching unit if the switching unit switching on and off the heating elements is turned off
- {claim 9} a discharging part discharging a residual voltage of the switching unit according to the first nozzle selection signal and/or the second nozzle selection signal
- {claim 10} the switching unit comprises a transistor having a first terminal coupled to the discharging part
- {claim 11} the discharging part is coupled to the level shift unit to receive the first and second nozzle selection signal so that the residual voltage of the switching unit is discharged according to at least one of the first transient time of the first nozzle selection signal and the second transient time of the second nozzle selection signal when the switching unit is turned on and/or off according to the second nozzle selection signal

Hiwada et al discloses, with respect to claims 2 and 9-11, a discharging part attached to a print head drive circuit (figure 7, reference 3; column 7, lines 65-67).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the teachings of Hiwada et al into the invention of the applicant's admitted prior art. The motivation for the skilled artisan in doing so is to gain the benefit of discharging the current that flows through the level shift unit. The combination naturally suggests:

- {claim 2} a discharging part discharging a residual voltage of a signal inputted from the level shift unit to a gate of the switching unit if the switching unit switching on and off the heating elements is turned off
- {claim 9} a discharging part discharging a residual voltage of the switching unit according to the first nozzle selection signal and/or the second nozzle selection signal
- {claim 10} the switching unit comprises a transistor having a first terminal coupled to the discharging part
- {claim 11} the discharging part is coupled to the level shift unit to receive the first and second nozzle selection signal so that the residual voltage of the switching unit is discharged according to at least one of the first transient time of the first nozzle selection signal and the second transient time of the second nozzle selection signal when the switching unit is turned on and/or off according to the second nozzle selection signal

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 3, 5, 7, 12-18, 21-23, and 26-30 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 3, 5, 7, 12-18, 21-23, and 26-30 disclose subject matter, which was not found, taught, or disclosed in the prior arts.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 02/01/07 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

The applicant argues, "The Examiner fails to show that AAPA explicitly or inherently shows the Applicant's 'transient time extending part,' as recited in the independent claims."

The examiner respectfully disagrees. The examiner has repeatedly demonstrated that the AAPA discloses the transient time extending part in the fact that the right part of buffer 144 discloses a first PMOS and first NMOS which necessarily extends the transient time, even though the extent of this function may be minimal or even negligent when compared to the time extending characteristics of transient time extending part 243. The applicant still has not rebutted these arguments with respect to figure 6.

The applicant's references to the differences between figures 4 and 7 do not successfully rebut the above argument. For one thing, the graphs in figure 4 are so small that it is not possible to accurately rely on their accuracy. The applicant believes that figure 4 shows that "when the input voltage (A) is changed from low to high, the transient time is identical to the transient time

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of the output voltage (B)..." The examiner cannot verify this claim based on figure 4 only. The examiner believes that figure 4 likely represents a small transient extending time that cannot be highlighted due to the limitations of the figure.

Rather than rely on a small figure, the examiner has shown that the essential difference between AAPA and the present application is the presence of a second PMOS and NMOS. The examiner believes that the existence of a first PMOS and NMOS is sufficient to demonstrate a time-extending element. The applicant has not shown any empirical evidence to support how the presence of two PMOS' and NMOS' can provide for the extension of transient time, while a single PMOS and NMOS does not provide for any.

The examiner reminds the applicant that claim limitations are given their broadest reasonable interpretation. The examiner previously requested that the applicant give some metes and bounds to the term "transient time extending part," such as by giving a numeric range of time extension. The applicant has not done so. Therefore, the examiner broadly interprets that even a minimal or negligent amount of time extension satisfies the claimed "transient time extending part." This minimal amount of time extension is demonstrated by the first PMOS and NMOS of buffer 144. The applicant has not shown any empirical evidence that the first PMOS and NMOS by themselves have absolutely zero effect on transient time extension. The examiner requests that the applicant either submit experimental data supporting their arguments or add limitations to more specifically define the metes and bounds of "transient time extending part." As it is, the applicant's arguments are not persuasive.

With regard to the applicant's arguments with regard to Hiwada, the examiner believes that the applicant may be improperly narrowing the scope of the claimed invention. Hiwada and

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AAPA are in the same field of endeavor in that they are both directed to circuitry for the driving of an inkjet printhead. AAPA lacks the explicit teaching of a discharging part (which is well known to one of ordinary skill in the art). Hiwada discloses discharging a circuit as a general principle. This principle can be applied to AAPA, such that it is naturally suggested by the combination that the discharging part discharges a residual voltage of a signal inputted from the level shift unit to a gate of the switching unit switching on and off the heating elements is turned off.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Leonard S. Liang whose telephone number is (571) 272-2148. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30-5 Monday-Friday.


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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Stephen Meier can be reached on (571) 272-2149. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

04/27/07

LSL LSL


STEPHEN MEIER
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER